

## Marietta Johnson, Illustrated Newspaper Articles, Women’s Magazines, 1907-1916. Part I

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**Abstract:** *This case study discusses media attention directed at Marietta Johnson and her School of Organic Education in Fairhope, Alabama from 1907-1916.*

**Key Words:** *Helen Christine Bennett (1881-1969), Joseph Fels (1853-1914), Marietta Louise (Pierce) Johnson (1864-1938), Lydia Jane Newcomb Comings (1849-1946), John Dewey (1859-1952), Charles Hanford Henderson (1861-1941), Frank Stewart (1855-1942). Fairhope School of Organic Education.*

### Introduction

At Fairhope all love school, as no child is forced to do tasks that do not appeal. All must work and refrain from bothering others. When discipline is necessary, the appeal is to a sense possessed by the child and not to that he does not possess. The child is unmoral, that is, his morals have not yet developed. He is taught to behave in order to be wanted and to have companionship. When work is interesting, meaningless restrictions are unnecessary. (Pratchner, 1930, p. 24).

This quote is from William Wells Pratchner’s 1930 thesis on education and portrays Marietta Johnson’s School of Organic Education, a progressive experimental school in Fairhope, Alabama.

Marietta Louise (Pierce) Johnson (1864-1938) was an internationally renowned educator of progressive, experimental education. From founding day in 1907 until her death in 1938 she served as director of the Fairhope, Alabama, School of Organic Education. In 1919 she co-founded the Progressive Education Association. Apart from travelling to Europe for the founding conference of the New Education Fellowship (NEF) in Calais (France) in 1921, she was a speaker at the International Girl Scout Conference in Cambridge (England, 1922). Johnson attended bi-annual NEF international conferences in Germany (Heidelberg, 1925) and in Switzerland (Locarno, 1927). Later she also attended an educational conference in Ireland (Dublin, 1933), and was a speaker at the Chicago World’s Fair in 1933.

Young Marietta Pierce attended public schools in St. Paul, Minnesota and graduated from the State Normal School in St. Cloud, Minnesota in 1885. As an unmarried adult, she taught in elementary schools in rural Minnesota for five years and then trained future teachers at St. Paul State Normal School and at Moorhead State Normal School before transferring to Mankato State Normal School, where she was principal of the Primary Practice School until 1899. In 1897 she married John Franklin Johnson (1860-1919) with whom she had two sons (Clifford Ernest in 1901, and Franklin Pierce in 1905). The couple lived first in Mankato, Minnesota, then in western North Dakota (Staring, 2016).

In her autobiography *Thirty Years with an Idea*, Marietta Johnson (1974, p. 8) reported that a ‘conversion experience’ awoke her to experimental education:

I discovered that nearly everything I had been doing with such pride and success in the primary department was a violation of the order of the development of the nervous system. I realized that my enthusiasm was destructive, and the more efficient I was, the more I injured the pupils!

After reading Charles Hanford Henderson’s book *Education and the Larger Life*, Marietta Johnson wanted to open a school herself and promote new educational ideals. She wrote:

[...] I could not rest until I had started a school. I began experimenting with my own child and other children of the neighborhood. (Johnson, 1974, p. 12).

Henderson (1902) propagated an Organic Education, roughly meaning the development of the senses, good health, and expansion of ‘personal control’ (consult also Henderson 1898a-d).

In 1901 Marietta and Frank Johnson moved to St. Paul, but a year later they moved to Fairhope, Alabama, where Marietta taught at the local public school from January 12, 1903 (*Fairhope Courier*, 1903abcdefgh; 1904c).

On March 15, 1903, Marietta Johnson (1903) introduced herself to the Fairhope people in the local newspaper. Her educational goals of sending a letter to the *Fairhope Courier* editor are obvious:

School has been in session just two months. The enrollment has exceeded sixty, but the average attendance has been in the neighborhood of fifty-five. The growth in interest and application on the part of the pupils is very encouraging. The members of the highest class should be able to complete the course in the four common branches during the present school year, but the demands of the home and society may cause a number to fail.

It is true that children should not be overtaxed in school, neither should too great demands on their physical strength be made in the home, for a tired child cannot concentrate his attention well. Children *must* play, and if parents allow them no time for recreation at home they will take it in school, and the result is poor work and disorder. The habit of retiring early aids wonderfully in securing good work at school. Pupils who spend their evenings away from home very often are usually a detriment to the school, as they are unable to study seriously, and bring a disturbing influence to bear upon the others.

Tardiness and irregularity of attendance are among the most serious obstacles to satisfactory progress. Tardiness begets a spirit of indifference that is fatal to good work, and frequent absence destroys interest because the continuity of thought is broken. Every day's absence means the loss of two days' work. The attendance, however, is gradually improving; but if the parents would visit the school oftener and witness the evil effect of this irregularity, the improvement would certainly be more rapid and lasting. The first month the per cent. of attendance was eighty-five, with thirty-seven cases of tardiness. The second month the per cent. of attendance reached ninety-five, with thirty cases of tardiness.

A more intimate acquaintance of parents with the school is needed. Frequent visits, even tho' short, would be very beneficial. If every father and mother could *see* how their children are working and behaving, those children would much more speedily improve in their work. Co-operation is a necessity. Two mothers and one father have already visited the school, and it is hoped that every parent represented will go in, not only once, but as many times as possible.

Following is a list of the pupils who were neither tardy nor absent during the last month: [A list of the names of 20 children concluded Johnson's letter to the editor of the *Fairhope Courier*; J.S.]. Marietta L. Johnson.

In 1904 the Johnson couple moved again, this time to Barnett, Mississippi (*Fairhope Courier*, 1904ab). In the summer of 1906, Marietta Johnson for a short while returned to Fairhope to organize a 'Summer Normal' in Fairhope, the Baldwin County Summer Normal (*Fairhope Courier*, 1906abc). The Johnsons returned to the single-tax colony in Fairhope three years later (Comings, 1907; *Fairhope Courier*, 1907ac).

Before moving back to Fairhope, Marietta Johnson reintroduced herself to the people of Fairhope by writing a letter to the editor of the *Fairhope Courier*, published in the May 10<sup>th</sup> issue of the newspaper. This time Johnson (1907) revealed much of her religious personality and goals in life.

Dear Mr. Gaston:

I heartily endorse what you say of the need of religious teachers. The church and every individual Christian should have but one voice, and that to condemn evil everywhere. It is bad enough to have an unjust and un-Christian system, and be forced to suffer or profit by injustice, but to have such an order upheld by the teachers if righteousness is most discouraging,

As I said once while in Fairhope, I still firmly believe, that the effort to establish the Single Tax in Fairhope is a greater Christian work than that of any other organization of which I know, for it is seeking to establish conditions which make it possible for men to be Christians if they want to be, while the churches are simply aiming to make men Christians in an environment that compels Christian lives. The church today is in the position of the animal breeder who hopes to raise fine animals by denying them very condition of food and shelter necessary to their growth. He fails, he is disappointed in the product of his labor. The church fails—is disappointed in the product of its labor.

The present lack of regeneration seems appalling considering the fact of nineteen hundred years of effort!

Human beings cannot become spiritual when the very existence of the body depends upon unrighteous dealing! The religious teachers must address themselves to the task of changing the conditions of industry—the laws under which all must exist. The laws must make it possible to be just—make it possible to be a Christian in the highest sense of the word. Let the church insist upon common justice in the nation and there will be some hope of reforming the individual.

Once make it possible to be an honest Christian, and it will no longer be necessary for the church to agonize over lost souls. Men will accept salvation gladly for then it will be possible to live consistently. Then one may grow in grace. Industry and business will not interfere with spiritual development.

We all read the *Courier* regularly with the greatest interest, and really I live in Fairhope a great deal of the time, although my physical being is up here in the woods! I am so glad the pastor of the Christian church is touching the social problems. Every preacher should of course. It is a shame that most of them are either indifferent or cowardly! I am hoping to come to Fairhope some of these days to stay! I am more interested than ever before in the reforms for which Fairhope exists, and I should be more than happy to be able to spend the rest of my life in helping ever so little in so great a cause.

Marietta L. Johnson, Barnet [*sic*; J.S.], Miss.

Back in Fairhope, in November 1907, Marietta Johnson and her friend Lydia J. Newcomb Comings established a school in the Johnson cottage. Charles Hanford Henderson travelled to Fairhope to give an address at the school's opening (*Fairhope Courier*, 1907b; Newcomb Comings, 1907). The school was made up of Marietta's two children and a small number of "little villagers whose parents allowed them to be played upon" (Rawson, 1920). Not much later, however, Johnson's youngest son Franklin Pierce died of a fall. Marietta Johnson interrupted her work for a short time but reopened the school in December (Johnson & Johnson, 1907). And another tragedy followed suit: Lydia Newcomb Comings' husband died (*Fairhope Courier*, 1908m).

In 1908 Marietta Johnson's school was known as Comings Memorial College of Organic Education. In 1909 the school was renamed School for Organic Training, also in 1909 College for Organic Training and later that year Comings Memorial School of Organic Education, in 1910 Comings Memorial College of Organic Education, and lastly, School of Organic Education (Staring, 2016). Lydia Newcomb Comings (1915) claimed that the term 'Organic Education' was first used by Charles Hanford Henderson in his 1902 *Education and the Larger Life*. Henderson, however, had already used it for years, probably first in public lectures in Boston at the Sloyd Training School in 1897, a year later in *Appleton's Popular Science Monthly* (Henderson, 1898d) and then again in public lectures in 1899 at the Industrial School Hall in Boston and at the Griffith Hall as well as at the Crozer Building in Philadelphia (Staring, 2013). While Harriet Maria Scott (1897) used the phrase for her book *Organic Education* in 1897, Felix Adler had addressed an 'Organic Education' as early as in 1894 (Morice, 2017; Staring, 2016). Yet, ten years prior to Adler, in 1884, Henry H. Straight already used the term when suggesting new education "in reference to industry" (*New Haven Daily Morning Journal and Courier*, 1884):

The meaning of the new education is vague. It is not mechanical education. Organic education expresses better the meaning that is to be expressed. We cannot educate the hand without educating the brain. The unity of man's nature must not be overlooked.

### 1908: News About Marietta Johnson's School in the *Fairhope Courier*

In the first three years of its existence, the school founded by both Lydia Newcomb Comings and Marietta Johnson did not attract much media attention. The *Fairhope Courier* (1908l) of January 10 reported that Johnson was already recruiting students.

Mrs. Johnson has inaugurated an evening class in literature, mental arithmetic [*sic*; J.S.], etc., meeting two evenings out of the week, for those whose duties prevent their attending school in the

day-time. Quite a number of the young people are in attendance and Mrs. Johnson is succeeding in making the class very interesting as well as instructive for them.

In January and February 1908, the school bombarded *Fairhope Courier* readers with weekly announcements:

Free Kindergarten.

From 9 to 11 a. m. Mrs. Johnson conducts a kindergarten to which all the children of Fairhope between the ages of 4 and 10, who are not otherwise employed, are not only invited, but urged to come. This is a part of the school for organic education and older pupils will find classes suitable to their needs. A class in physical culture will be conducted from four until four thirty daily, in which the Emerson system will be used as a basis. This is also free and all children and adults who may be interested are invited to attend. (*Fairhope Courier*, 1908e; consult also *Fairhope Courier*, 1908dfghij).

On March 8, the *Fairhope Courier* (1908q) reported that at a meeting of the Fairhope School Improvement Committee, plans had been made to improve Johnson's school.

A considerable sum has been placed at command of the school for organic education under Mrs. Johnson's direction. This school is very much hampered for lack of room. The committee plans with the sum at their disposal to begin at once the erection of a building 20x30 two stories in height, on the lot adjoining that on which the Johnson home stands. The lower floor of this will be finished up at once for the kindergarten. The upper story may not be finished at once...I is planned within a few months to put up on the same lot, another building for a manual training department under Mr. Johnson. Mr. Johnson is an experienced mechanic and has been an instructor in manual training...This is good news indeed. The education of the head and hands must proceed together for the best results. We believe this school will soon become one of the drawing cards of Fairhope.

And on July 3, the *Fairhope Courier* (1908c) reported:

The school for Organic Training closed Friday June 26, with a picnic on the beach to which the parents were invited and which quite a number of the mothers attended. The children spent a very happy day with the swings and the bathing and between forty and fifty sat down to a bountiful dinner at one of the large tables built under the trees. Mrs. Johnson was very much surprised and delighted in receiving a pretty fan from two of the little ones and a purse of seven dollars with a letter of appreciation from the patrons of the kindergarten.

On September 11 and 18, after the school's second year had been planned, Johnson's school placed the following 'Announcement' in the *Fairhope Courier* (1908ab).

The School for Organic Training opens Monday, Sept. 28, at nine o'clock. The work will consist of the following courses.

Regular kindergarten work for children under six years of age.

A Life Class for pupils from six to ten years of age pursuing the following—Music, Art, Bodily accomplishments, and Physical Development, Nature Study, Field Geography, Elementary Number, Language History Stories, Literature, Gardening and Industrial Training.

Pupils over ten years of age will pursue the usual studies with special attention given to physical development and pose, Manual Training, Agriculture, Music and Art work.

A course for those preparing to teach has been arranged as follows

FIRST SEMESTER:

History and Science of Education

Psychology

Theory of Teaching

Elementary Science

School Music and Art.



SECOND SEMESTER;

Practice Teaching

Special Methods

Review of Common Branches

School Music and Art

Those who are competent and desire it, will be given an opportunity to practise [*sic*; J.S.] teaching during the first Semester. Arrangements have been made to give lessons in Instrumental Music to those who may desire it.

At the end of September the school started again after the summer holidays. The *Fairhope Courier* (1908r) reported:

The School for Organic Training started off very promising Monday morning. The room had been put in order by the ladies' committee, with pretty white curtains at the windows and [*sic*; J.S.] everything clean and attractive. Thirty-four pupils were enrolled, the kindergarten and life class being especially satisfactory. A teacher's training class was started with four students, and others are coming in.

And the December 11 *Fairhope Courier* (1908o) had a short story of an outing of the school's children and teachers — “to the number of thirty in all” — to a sugar cane farm and syrup firm. The children and teachers were

[...] shown all about the syrup making processes; and the children particularly delighted by being hoisted high in the air in a rope basket several at a time, with the tackle by which the cane is handled to the grinder. Even the teachers indulged in this “thriller.”

In 1908, Lydia Newcomb Comings addressed the audience at several women's conferences. The first mention in the media was on October 13, 1908, when the *Buffalo Courier* (1908) announced that the Mother's Club “will have a lecture sometime in November by Mrs. S. H. Comings, who conducts a school at Fairhope Alabama, her subject to be ‘Organic Training for Children.’” The *Republican Journal* (1910) of October 28, 1908, reported on the 16<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the Maine Federation of Women's Clubs held in Portland earlier that month. One of the topics covered at the closing meeting was ‘Organic Training,’ discussed in a speech by Newcomb Comings. She also published at least one article about the school (consult *Fairhope Courier*, 1908t).

Marietta Johnson was busy introducing her interpretation of Henderson's approach to education such as not specifying single-year grade groups. Instead, the four- and five-year-olds formed the kindergarten class; and the children six to thirteen years of age formed the so-called ‘life class.’ Henderson (1902, p. 190) had outlined such ideal class formation in his *Education and the Larger Life*:

The work itself is so largely individual that a single group may properly include children of quite unlike ages. ... The habit of massing together children of the same age takes away from the pleasure and picturesqueness of life, and ends by making the children themselves quite selfish and unregardful of others.

Despite her very busy work at school, Marietta Johnson began lecturing at various meetings early in 1908 about her growing school and its goals, as well as education in general (see for instance: *Fairhope Courier*, 1908pns). On February 14 and 21, the *Fairhope Courier* published the text of a paper read by Johnson for Fairhope's Thursday Club:

All agree that the aim of education is the perfecting of the human being. Proper bed and clothing and sleep and exercise make the infant strong and healthy and beautiful. In the same spirit we attempt through courses of study to develop the mind of the growing child into a strong healthy character, keen, clean and high minded...What has nature to say, and how may we know that we are really following Nature? First of all let us agree that the whole child must be considered when we speak of child development. We do not mean merely physical development. We do not mean only mental development. We do not mean spiritual development alone, but we mean all, when we use the word development. It is impossible to develop one side of the child and ignore the rest of him...Nature demands wholesome food, clothing, baths, rest, recreation, a quiet unexciting life for the child in

order that the body may be strong and to preserve the integrity of the nervous system. The school should cooperate with the home to secure the best conditions for the best life. More bathing, more sleep, less of being out at night, less nervous strain to keep up to grades, less excitement, more quiet, simpler [sic; J.S.] food, and fewer social demands on the child. (Johnson, 1908a).

The growing mind is naturally interested in the things of sense. The school should use this natural interest as the foundation of all development. The growing mind may not give intense prolonged attention. The school should provide simple exercise of this creative power, following it to be self-suggestive as far as possible...The school should provide other work that is in harmony with the child's physiological development, that is with the brain and nerve development of the child. The growing child demands activity. The school should not demand inactivity but provide the fullest freedom of movement. The growing child demands intelligent play. The school should provide this means of development. In a word, it is the business of the school to take a real interest in every activity of the child's life: covering twenty-four hours each day for three hundred and sixty-five days in a year, as all these activities constitute what is known as nutrition and the child's development depends entirely upon his nutrition...The aim should be to provide a simple natural environment and allow the child to develop as naturally and symmetrical as possible seeing to it that the environment allows for self-prompted creative activity...Life will thus be full for him—full of joy because he is well and strong and conscious of physical life and power. Full of interest because he has been trained to see and taste and smell and hear. Full of delight because he is able to make things—to master materials to shape them to his will. He does things with all his heart because he loves to do them and his reward is in the doing. He is honest because he is doing that which he chooses to do and so to attain the end which he himself has chosen he himself must work truly. The end of such work must be strength and beauty of body, mind and spirit, and that is the true aim of the school. (Johnson, 1908b).

Already in 1908, soap magnate, social reformer and philanthropist Joseph Fels who visited Johnson's school made an initial donation of \$5,000, which not only allowed the school to survive, but even move to a large ten-acre location at Fairhope's School Street. Fels would donate \$1,000 a year for the next five years (*Fairhope Courier*, 1909b; Johnson, 1974). In spite of that, Marietta Johnson had to promote her school and the concept of Organic Education more widely to raise money to support the school — by writing articles about the school, its goals and its curriculum, to gain media attention; by seeking financial assistance to support her school and by lecturing on her teaching methods (Staring, 2013, 2016). As a result of these fundraising activities, an education historian once said, she increasingly became the school's principal *in absentia*.

### **The Early Days of the Press About Marietta Johnson's School in Fairhope**

In 1909 Johnson's school bombarded *Fairhope Courier* readers again with advertisements: "School for Organic Training. Mrs. M. L. Johnson, Principal. Fairhope, Ala. Write for particulars" (e.g., *Fairhope Courier*, 1909a). And again in 1909, Marietta Johnson spoke in public or lectured on various occasions in Fairhope or elsewhere, but only a few issues of the *Fairhope Courier* have covered it (e.g., *Fairhope Courier*, 1909edj), even though the paper often reported on the school (*Fairhope Courier*, 1909cfg).

One early 1909 mention of Marietta Johnson's school appeared in another newspaper, in an article by William E. Curtis (1909) about Fairhope in the Washington, D.C. *Evening Star*. There it says,

Three free schools are maintained eight months in the year. One is an ordinary public school, another is what is called a "school of organic education," which means a school for teachers, and furnishes instruction in every grad of teaching from the kindergarten to high school methods. The third is a music school [...].

It appears that it became known that Marietta Johnson was already teaching future teachers at the time. This was also mentioned in an advertisement in the *Federation Bulletin* of May 1909, stating that the School for Organic Training received "pupils of any age" and offered a "Normal Course for Teachers."

Natural Methods, Brain Development through training of the Sense Organs. Kindergarten, "Life Class" Advanced Classes, Normal Course for Teachers, Manual Training, School Garden, Out-door Gymnasium. (School for Organic Training, 1909).

The *Fairhope Courier* published “It Is Strange” on April 2 — a short article with many of the features of a religiously influenced educational thunder sermon written by Marietta Johnson (1909b):

Every living thing has a law of its development, a natural order of unfolding and coming to maturity...It is strange that society, human government should have ignored for so long, such a fundamental law of progress as equality of opportunity. It is strange that the religious teachers have not, ere this, insisted upon the restoration of the use of the earth on equal terms to all the children of men. Strange, that those who proclaim the Father’s tender love to man, are not equally jealous in making men conscious of the material manifestation of that love—the unfailing bounty of the earth—and in condemning the greed which denies to the weakest member of the human family, his just portion of his Father’s gift.

Every child develops according to an unchangeable law of his nature. The laws of the mental unfolding are quite inexorable as those of physical growth and may not be violated. It is strange that so many educational leaders should ignore so fundamental a principle as self-prompted activity in the development of both the physical and mental power of the child. Self-prompted activity does not mean license to do wrong...It is the business of parents and teachers to provide such an environment that the child may be able to choose his activity...The daily school program should allow more freedom of choice, more opportunity for the child to work for the joy of working, not because it is in the course of study, not because he will pass or receive high marks, but because his very nature demands the activity...

It is strange that educators should take children from the world of sensation, the only condition of real development and put them into a world of books; of abstractions and generalizations. Strange that they should deprive the child of the most fundamental necessity—self-prompted activity—and enforce the constant following of directions, the constant doing of unwelcome tasks, which is the very source of weakness, and then wonder at the great lack of true human power in the world.

An early article solely about Johnson’s school appeared in the April 19, 1909 edition of the Syracuse, New York, *Post Standard* — a newspaper with a circulation of about 46,000 copies at the time. It is an account of a Marietta Johnson lecture about her school written by Mrs. Mary Dana Hicks Prang, the wife of Louis Prang, a renowned art publisher (compare *Fairhope Courier*, 1909hi). (In fact, it is a reprint of part of a text originally published in the *Fairhope Courier*; consult Hicks Prang, 1909).

The topic for the afternoon was “What Is Organic Education?” and Mrs. Johnson, the enthusiastic principal of the school, with beaming eyes and earnest words told of the work she is trying to do. She aims for the sound, accomplished, beautiful body — the intelligent, creative mind — the sympathetic, reverent spirit...True development must come through experience, guided experience, for she desires to present the right to the children, being of the firm conviction that one cannot look upon the right and do the wrong. Herein lies a whole body of doctrine. Also man is a unit body, mind and spirit; these must be developed not only for his individual growth, but for social growth...And in this process, every effort is made always for each one to do his best and so whether in skill or in creation, will grow individuality...In the Organic School, the children do no book study until they are 10 years old, then with eager, alert, curious minds, they burst into the world of others’ experiences while continuing their own sense experiences, and begin to share more completely the experience of others...During all this, their common work and play they are led through right guidance, to regard the rights of others, to grow in loving kindness, to advance in that brotherhood which the true democracy demands...The greatest punishment for the child is to be segregated from the common work and the common play. (Prang, 1909).

Marietta Johnson concluded her lecture by giving a day’s program.

“Organic Training” — the text of a paper presented by Lydia Newcomb Comings (1909b) at the Maine Federation’s sixteenth annual meeting, held in Portland, Oct. 20-22, 1908, published in the June 1909 *Federation Bulletin* — explains that Organic Training amounts to “advanced kindergarten work,” that is, training of the senses through “self-directed activities, freedom in the school-room and without,” allowing the “brain to develop without forcing and without stunting.” Newcomb Comings indicated,

Organic training stands for the individuality of the child, and have no fear but that the child trained in this way will, when he learns to use books at ten or twelve years of age, soon outstrip those who have been using books for a number of years, for, with this free, outdoor activity training, he will be sound

of brawn and brain and be eager for knowledge. That, after all, is the great thing — to have a desire for better things of life.

# The Federation Bulletin

A MAGAZINE FOR THE WOMAN OF TO-DAY

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## Organic Training.

By Lydia J. Newcomb Comings,

Fairhope, Alabama.

Figure 1: Excerpt from article by L. J. Newcomb Comings in the June 1909 *Federation Bulletin*.

In July, the *Fairhope Courier* published a small article written by Marietta Johnson (M. L. J., 1909b). Unlike Lydia Newcomb Comings, who spoke of “Organic Training” in 1908, Johnson spoke of “Organic Education” in 1909. She wrote,

Organic education has set itself the task of studying the order of the unfolding of the powers of the child and providing activities in harmony with that order...One great cause of the common lack of initiative and purposefulness in adults, is the fact that they in the growing years, acted under the will of others exclusively, which weakened the will and prevented the development of individuality...All control must lead to self-control, all direction to self-direction. Voluntary effort is secured, true will power is developed when the individual endures hardship, or performs disagreeable or difficult tasks for the sake of attaining an end which to him seems most desirable. The more the child is allowed to find and solve his own problems, the more he is allowed to see desirability of the end and the greater his effort to attain the end which to him is desirable, the greater will be the development of individuality, the stronger and more complete the true growth.

In the same issue of the *Fairhope Courier*, a letter to the editor written by Johnson (1909a) was published. Since the letter is not related to educational issues, it is not discussed here. *The Public* (1909) of August 20 announced a small pamphlet about the school:

A prospectus of the “Comings Memorial College of Organic Education” for boys and girls at Fairhope, Alabama, under the principalship of Mrs. M. L. Johnson, unfolds an interesting plan for stimulating the development of childhood through self-prompted creative ability.

This prospectus, like an earlier pamphlet about the school written by Lydia Newcomb Comings, has not been preserved (*Fairhope Courier*, 1909c; Staring, 2016).

The same day, the *Fairhope Courier* published a letter to the editor written by Marietta Johnson (1909c). In it she formulated educational issues already stipulated earlier:

It is very important that the occupations of childhood shall be as spontaneous, as nearly self-prompted as possible, that the best development may be attained. In order to develop the will the child must desire the end in his work, for only through conscious effort for a desired end is will power developed. But the child is young, immature, lacking in experience and judgment. How can he possibly choose wisely? He cannot. It is the province of the teacher and parent to guide and protect him in his weakness. How then, may the child’s occupation be self-prompted...That is the great question which confronts the progressive teacher and parent today...The supreme test of the parent or teacher’s power is to be able to change the center of interest, without destroying the tendency to activity. If a child is destructive he must become constructive, without thwarting or weakening the will. Economic pressure, overwork and worry make both parent and teacher often resort to force and



coercion, which destroy individuality, weaken will power and prevent symmetrical development. That makes the new education an important part in economic reform. The social order must be improved in order to have proper conditions for true educational development...Joy in the work is one of the most health giving conditions to be fulfilled. But children often like to do things which are positively injurious. The teacher and parent should know what is for the good of the child—provide activity in harmony with the natural order of development—in harmony with his nature..Then and not until then will the school work measure up to the highest educational requirements.

In an article, entitled “Organic Education,” in the October 1909 *Federation Bulletin*, the official organ of the Massachusetts State Federation of Women’s Clubs, Lydia Newcomb Comings (1909a) defined Organic Education as dealing “with the present,” because, according to her, “The question asked is not what is to be the future of the child, but what can we do to-day to give him a full, well-rounded, wholesome day?” Newcomb Comings put the text in promotional words:

A day with its full complement of work such as is suited to [the child’s] age and ability, with rest and play in good measure, with wholesome food and comfortable dress that in no way retards his physical growth, with such intellectual nourishment as shall tend to mental development, withal such moral teaching, both by example and precept, as shall make for the best and truest in life and character. Such a day as this has no attendant nerve strain. There is no worry about daily marks or future examinations, no temptation to deception, for the child is considered individually, and is encouraged to someone else’s standard.

The October 9 issue of the *Fairhope Courier* published a short report by Marietta Johnson (1909d) of a meeting of teachers at the County Institute at Daphne, Alabama earlier that month in which she summarized the speeches of several speakers.

Finally, in 1909, *The Public* published Marietta L. Johnson’s article “Education. For The Public,” the first of a series of three articles published in *The Public* (Johnson, 1909a, 1910a, 1911b). In 1910, the *Journal of Education* published the first article by Johnson (1910c) devoted *entirely* to her school in a national journal. These four articles of Johnson’s pen have been elaborated in detail in a previous article in this *International Journal of Case Studies*, and will not be re-analyzed here (see Staring, 2016).

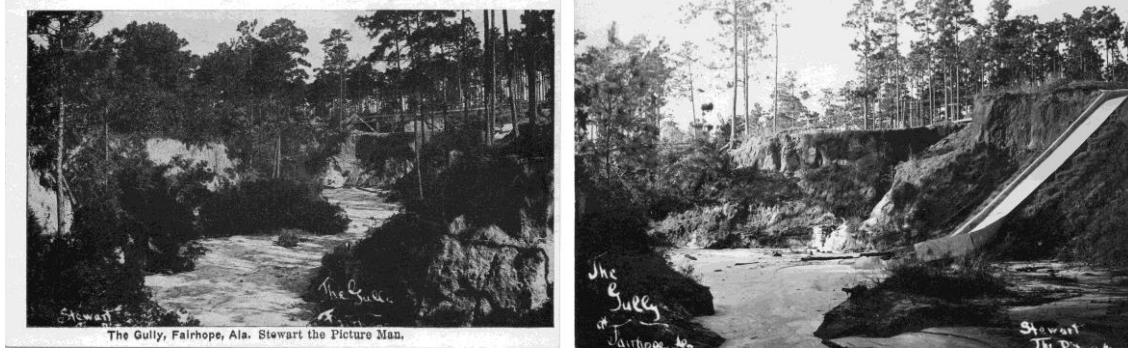
### **1910: The First Photo of Johnson’s School in a Newspaper — *The Fairhope Courier***

During the first years of the school’s existence, the number of pupils grew steadily. As a result, from about 1911 onwards, the six- and seven-year-olds at Johnson’s school formed the ‘first life class;’ the eight- and nine-year-olds the ‘second life class;’ and so on to ‘fourth life class’ (see Newcomb Comings, 1915, pp. 182-191).

On January 12, the *Christian Science Monitor* (1910) published an article on Fairhope’s single tax colony, in which Johnson’s school was mentioned in passing: “The rising generation, the children, are taught, in the “organic” school, how to employ their hands in the arts, as well as how to solve mathematical problems and parse sentences.” A day later, *Friend* published a letter to the editor by Marion Smith (1910) recommending Fairhope to Quakers, in which she stated,

Besides the regular public school (for the use of which a new six thousand dollar cement block building is in course of construction), the Colony maintains a college free to all who live on Colony land, called the “College for Organic Education.”...One feature which particularly pleases us as Friends, is that the children are taught to answer not by saying “Yes sir,” or “No ma’am,” but plain “yes” and “no.” There are five teachers employed in the different departments, among which are kindergarten, domestic science, manual training and others.

In May 1910, Lydia Newcomb Comings delivered two presentations at the Convention of the General Federation of Women’s Clubs in Cincinnati, Ohio, promoting the Fairhope school and its educational theory. Newcomb Comings’ presentations were briefly discussed in the Convention’s official report (Lake, 1910; Stevens, 1910).



**Figures 2 and 3: The photographs show Stack’s Gully, Fairhope, Alabama. Local photographer Frank Stewart, also known as “The Picture Man,” took these pictures, printed as postcards. The photographs also appear in Barrett (2017, pp. 168 and 170, respectively). Consult also MBNEP (n.d.). (Jeroen Staring Collection).**

In July 1910, the *Boston Daily Globe* published Alice Gertrude Herring’s (1910) article “Children’s Paradise;” the article has been detailed in a previous article (Staring, 2016) and will therefore not be analyzed again here. Yet, Herring described a remarkably motivating feature of Johnson’s educational approach in her school — daily trips into nature:

One of the most interesting features of the entire life class is the daily walk. No particular plan is followed in this walk. It is not a part of any “course” which is being followed. In the spring there are frog eggs to observe...Then the birds’ nest must be visited...Then the different birds must be found out and observed, so the interest of the daily walk is determined for weeks, not by the will of the teacher nor the “course of study,” but by the activities of the birds. If alligators have been caught by some boys, or if a new government boat is at the pier ahead, the walk will take that direction, because everybody is talking about these things, interest is keen, and why should they not be enjoyed by the children, and at the same time be made a source of education? When the flowers are in bloom, there are all the tree blossoms to hunt...After every storm, of course, the children must run to the gullies to see what the rain has done [see *Figure 2* and *Figure 3*; J.S.]. The watersheds, river systems, etc., that are discovered afford great pleasure. Why this stream is curved, why this gully is washed clean and another filled up, why these pebbles were left here and only fine sand there and many other questions are asked and answers sought on these “runs” to the gullies after a rain. In winter the trees are interesting because it takes keener eyes to identify a tree without its leaves, so many walks are taken for that purpose.

As noted above, as early as 1909 there was talk of a “school for teachers” (Curtis, 1909) or a “Normal Course for Teachers” (School for Organic Training, 1909). (Later that year, the *Bismarck Tribune* (1912), in a report on a Johnson speech to the Home and School Association in Washington, stated that Johnson “described the teachers’ training class, wherein the teachers were fitted for teaching”).

Alice Gertrude Herring (1910) elaborated further:

A teacher’s training class is conducted, the main work of which is the study of the development of the child, special attention being given to the needs of the child at the various stages of his growth. The school must make [sic; J.S.] the child sounder, more accomplished and beautiful of body, more intelligent and sympathetic of mind, more reverent of spirit, and this end must be attained in the present. School must be life, not simply a preparation for life.

It is not known how many teachers Marietta Johnson trained and only a few articles have been written by such teachers. An early account of how to teach a discipline (here: music) can be found in “Lullabies and What They Should Mean to Children” by Myrtle Douglas Keener (1914) in the *Normal Instructor and Primary Plans*. Douglas Keener, Director of Music at Johnson’s school, ended her article as follows:

To teach beautiful songs without reading of notes, until we find the child ready for sight-reading, will develop in our people a love of music and a joy in it that is fast passing away. We must bring our people back to the desire to burst into song at work, at play, in our homes and on our holidays. We must have folk-singing before we will give to the world our share of great composers. Let us start this good work in our schools by singing lullabies, the first kind of song a child should know and love and

sing. Let us apply Mrs. Johnson's ideas for "organic" education to our teaching of music, so that teacher and pupils may find it a joy and a blessing.

A brief account of Marietta Johnson's ideas regarding agricultural education given at the Conference on Agricultural Education held in July 1910 in Minneapolis, Minnesota (*Twice-A-Week Spokesman Review*, 1910) appeared in the *Sixteenth Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Minnesota* (Johnson, 1910b). Early in August, the *University Missourian* (1910) published an interview with Johnson. She praised Fairhope and stated that her school was "a revolution from the standpoint of education" and in her own words, "another 'crank institution.'" Interestingly, the interview also appeared in many other newspapers such as *The Arizona Republican*, and in various magazines such as *The Commoner* and *The Labor Digest* (Staring, 2016).

The *Fairhope Courier* (1910b) of September 16 published a short article about Johnson's school stating the school will open for the fall period on October 3 — "With Full Corps of Teachers."

The School of Organic Education will open on Monday, Oct. 3. Mrs. Johnson will, as always be in charge and will be assisted by Miss Taggart and Miss Caldwell, who were here last year, and Miss Hill, of Pa., who will come to us for the first time, but very highly recommended... Mr. Johnson will again be found in the manual training department. As a number of pupils from out of town are expected a boarding hall will be opened under supervision of Mrs. Parro, of Boston, who will also teach domestic science. Mrs. Johnson has spent much of the summer lecturing in the northern cities, has aroused great enthusiasm and met with most heart ideas. A number of persons have shown their appreciation of the effort being made here in Fairhope by substantial donations to the work, among them Mrs. Emmons Blaine whose name is familiar to everyone who knows of the splendid work done by Col. Francis Parker and his associates in Chicago. Mrs. Johnson is now in New York city where she will speak on Organic Education in place of Mrs. Comings, at the Domestic Science Congress at Madison Square Garden, Sept. 17-14. The prospectus of the school can be obtained of Mrs. Comings or at the Courier office. People in the north are looking for such a school as this in a mild climate. Let your friends know about it.

It is really fascinating that the article featured a photo of a class of students and two teachers. The caption of the photo reads, "Life Class of Organic School." The same photograph is in the collection of the online Fairhope Single Tax Corporation Archives (*FSTCA*, n.d., Object ID BSS.442-449). There, the caption reads, "Photograph...by Frank Stewart...of Organic School students and teachers." Frank Stewart, "The Picture Man," was the local photographer who ran the local stationery and photo shop and the schoolbook depository. The names of many of the children are also mentioned. And it is said that the two teachers are Lois Slosson Sundberg and Olive Wooster.

Note that the photo is the first photo of Johnson's school published in the media!

A week later the *Fairhope Courier* (1910a) had a small announcement, which read:

The School of Organic Education has arranged for a business course to be conducted by Miss Lillian Stewart. The courses will include stenography, type-writing, and book-keeping. The terms will be \$25 for the year.

In December 1910, Alice Gertrude Herring published an article only sideways about Johnson's school. She was married, now Mrs. Alice Herring Christopher, and had written a near-full-page article on Fairhope, which also mentioned Johnson's school — the Comings Memorial College of Organic Education. Herring Christopher (1910) wrote:

Fairhope has a public school of unusually high efficiency. In addition, there is the Comings Memorial college of organic education, an institution embodying the very latest and best educational ideals, doing a wonderful work for the youth of Fairhope that is not duplicated in any place, large or small, elsewhere.

The text was illustrated with five photos, one of these from the Fairhope Public School, but not a single photo of Johnson's school. Still, it was remarkable that the article contained so many photos. In fact, it was a turning point for newspaper and magazine articles about the school. From 1911 onwards, quite a few articles with photographic images of Marietta Johnson's school appeared: images of school buildings, of school children and also of learning activities.

## 1911: First Photos of Johnson's School in the National Media

The January 1911 issue of *Good Housekeeping* contained a letter to the editor of Anna Dickinson Pope (1911) describing Fairhope, where “a man and wife having a fixed income of fifty dollars per month can get the most out of their money in comfort and happiness.” Note that *Good Housekeeping* had a circulation of about 300,000 copies. Pope wrote that the climate felt fine, allowing for three crops a year; that boating, bathing and fishing were of the best. She ended her letter:

Fairhope celebrates its sixteenth birthday on New Year's day, 1911. It has the only free public library in the state of Alabama...It is beautifully laid out, with the water front and a handsome grove of pines in the center of the town reserved and improved as parks. There is an excellent public school, and the Fairhope School of Organic Education...is attracting the attention of educators and drawing pupils from all over the country. Teachers trained in its normal courses are in demand.

Pope's letter to the editor of a so-called women's magazine did not attract much attention. In contrast, a festive occasion in Fairhope was strongly advertised in the *Fairhope Courier* (1911a) of January 20: “Concert at Fairhope Auditorium. Benefit of C.M.S. of Organic Education and Pub. School. Thurs. Jan. 26, 1911.”

In late February, Marietta Johnson and Lydia Newcomb Comings attended sessions of the Department of Superintendence of the National Educational Association in nearby Mobile, Alabama. The *Fairhope Courier* (1911b) reported positively,

While there they, of course, talked Organic Education wherever opportunity offered and they found many interested in that subject and in Fairhope. Many expressed a desire to visit Fairhope and the school.

Two attendees did indeed visit Fairhope and stayed overnight with Marietta Johnson after the conference.

In late June, the *Fairhope Courier* (1911c) reported that Marietta Johnson and teacher Lois Slosson would be leaving for Philadelphia on July 1, where they were expected to lecture on Organic Education and lead a ‘model school’ for a period of six weeks in a summer school at the University of Pennsylvania.

In the summer, on July 25, *Evening Journal* (1911) reported,

Mrs. Johnson, of the Organic School of Fairhope, Ala., lectured in the Woodlawn theatre at Arden on Sunday morning on “Organic Education,” and in the evening the regular camp was held.

From 1911, Marietta Johnson would lecture and / or teach in Arden, Delaware every summer for several years.

It is interesting to note here that the September 22 and October 6, 13, and 20 issues of *The Public* featured ads, stating Johnson's school had become a boarding school as well: “School of Organic Education, at Fairhope, Ala. A Boarding School where Boys and Girls Develop Naturally and Really Live. Mariette [sic; J.S.] L. Johnson, Principal” (School of Organic Education, 1911). Also in September, the *Fairhope Courier* (1911d) reported that Marietta Johnson was one of the speakers at the opening of a new single tax colony at Westbrook in Cumberland County, Maine.

The October 11 and 13 issues of the *Washington Times* (1911ab) announced that Johnson would speak at a meeting of the Home and School Association of the Western High School that day:

The speaker of the evening will be Mrs. Marietta L. Johnson, principal of the School of Organic Education, at Fairhope, Ala. She is teaching a course there conducted upon an endowment by Joseph Fels. (*Washington Times*, 1911a).

Note that the *Washington Times* had a circulation of about 46,000 copies.

The *Washington Herald* of October 14 quoted Johnson at length:

When the school was opened four years ago...we had but six pupils, and when it opened last Monday for the year we had 100 pupils. The work that we have accomplished has proved that the system of compelling the child to meet the requirements of an iron-bound curriculum in school is wrong and that the purpose of the school should be to meet the needs of the child. Up to ten years of age the



pupils of our school do not use books unless they wish to read. Instead of books, they have music and art, handwork, gardening, fundamental conception of numbers, history, geography and literature in story form, and native studies.

Note that the *Washington Herald* had a circulation of about 27,000 copies.

And finally, the *Evening Star* (1911) summarized not only Johnson's address to the Home and School Association of the Western High School, but also the evening's comments:

Dr. Davidson, superintendent of schools, agreed with some of Mrs. Johnson's propositions, but did not believe a sweeping revision of all educational ideas and traditions would be good. "We can learn new theories," he said, "but while we are learning them we must not lose our hold on the things which we have in hand. Established precedents must not be thrown aside, to be superseded by theories in an experimental stage."

On November 17, the *Fairhope Courier* published "Education and Economics" — a long article by Marietta Johnson (1911a). In it she discussed a possible, indirect teaching of a sense of justice in children and young people. First she introduced the subject by referring to preachers and teachers and the school system of the time.

It has been pointed out that justice is the very highest virtue, because the latest in development. We have the strange spectacle of preachers and teachers calling upon people to strive for love, and in fact trying to develop a conception of divine love, and at the same time these same preachers and teachers are quite indifferent to conditions of the most glaring injustice.

As in some other texts written by her, the article almost seemed like a real sermon.

A conception of anything is not attained by preaching or teaching but by experience. Children have felt parental love from birth and conception of that virtue has grown into the very being with the unconscious development. Has justice had the same opportunity to enter the human conception?

Not according to Johnson, who suggested other ways of education!

Now, suppose our school system from the kindergarten through the university were to remove all requirements and simply to meet the demands of the growing mind and body? Suppose little children were allowed to work and play, sing and dance, hear stories and tell them, study nature and make things to their hearts' content...

Now suppose... "bright" children and "dull" children go on working and playing and studying through the school years without striving to "get ahead" or "keep ahead" of anybody without even a temptation to "crib" or "cheat" or appear to know when they do not know, never dreaming of failure, but realizing that all are succeeding, that some are doing one way, some another and that each has the sacred right to his own way! If the school will provide an environment which will allow all children to grow uninterruptedly, then their conception of justice will be a free field and equality of opportunity, for they have experienced equality of opportunity and conceptions come thru experience. Their conception of injustice will be a thwarting or structing [*sic*; J.S.] of the individual right of development. When these young people, I say, who have gained a conception of justice by living it, enter the adult world, they will not only be quick to recognize injustice—the obstructing of an individual's progress—but they will be strong and quick and true to remedy the wrong and establish a condition of equality of opportunity. A fully developed being cannot be happy in the presence of injustice to others.

The moral of the story?

No great economic reform can be effected by people who have been trained during the growing years to believe that success is in "passing" at school and in "making money" in later life. We must begin with the children. We must inject into our school system a different meaning of the word education....The school must provide for the entire organism—must be organic—every child must grow stronger and sounder of body, more intelligent of mind, sweeter, more helpful of spirit.

Johnson concluded by referring to her own school and goals for Organic Education:

The School of Organic Education at Fairhope, Ala., is an effort to show that true education does give equality of opportunity to develop in harmony with the law of the being. It is trying to prove that the

desire for knowledge and the “inner impulse” may be safely followed—that children will “know as much” and be stronger of body, more intelligent of mind, and sweeter of spirit if the natural desires (not caprices) are followed and the child really allowed to do the things that its nature demands at the time. It is striving to develop a conception of justice, by making no requirements under which some may naturally thrive, while others may languish. It strives to do no repressing nor forcing but provide ample opportunity for the quick child and ample opportunity for the slow child, by allowing him to progress a his own rate of development. Organic education is a true agent in establishing equality of opportunity in ushering in the brotherhood of man and should have the sympathy of every lover of justice—of every lover of his fellow man—of all who long for economic freedom

Proceedings of the Second Annual Single-tax Conference held in Chicago in November 1911 state that during the November 25 afternoon session a letter from Marietta Johnson was read. Mr. Fay Lewis from Illinois appealed for funds to help carry on Johnson’s Fairhope school. Joseph Fels in person seconded Lewis’s appeal “and called for ten-dollar subscriptions.” Fascinatingly, “\$182 was raised within a short time” (Joseph Fels Fund Commission, 1912, p. 24). The *Fairhope Courier* (1911e) of December 15 reported that a “subscription of \$172 was taken up, of which \$112 was paid on the spot.”

In November, the *Christian Science Monitor* (1911) published an article entitled “Women of Alabama at Head of Movement to Advance the Cause of Education.” The article enthusiastically referred to the School of Organic Education:

One of the most hopeful of the experimental schools of the country is the school of Organic Education at Fairhope, which was established by women [Lydia Newcomb Comings and Marietta Johnson; J.S.] five years ago and which aims to develop boys and girls naturally without examinations. Gardening, domestic arts and manual training lend interest to the work.

A photo of children roofing a wooden one-story building illustrates the article (compare *Figure 5*). The caption reads, “Girls and boys of Fairhope (Ala.) Organic school helping manual training teacher build house.” This photo is reprinted in Donelson (2005, p. 69 bottom) where the caption states that the students joined teachers “in roofing the new Domestic Science building.” Note it is the *very first* photo of Johnson’s school to be published in the ‘national’ media; local photographer Frank Stewart “The Picture Man” took the photo (see *Note 1*).

Finally, in December, the *Syracuse Herald* published “A Woman’s Message on Schools” by Edwin S. Potter, at the time a journalist living in the single tax community in Arden, Delaware. Six photos illustrate the article, including a portrait of “Mrs. Mariette [*sic*; J.S.] Johnson,” taken by photographer Marceau. Potter (1911b) wrote:

Mrs. Johnson’s will tell you that “organic education means the education of the entire organism—proper exercise for the development of the whole being.” Further she says (and here she gets down to the kernel of her message): “Organic education not only fits one to live: organic education is life.” This is from Mrs. Johnson’s statement that the child is a unit, and that consequently its whole being must be “developed simultaneously,” and that “growth should be unconscious and natural”: should be “joyous and continuous, unhampered by striving for marks and promotions.”

#### THE CLUE TO HER METHOD

“Childhood’s law of development is self-prompted, creative activity.” In that statement you have the clue to the method and success of the School of Organic Education. The school simply tries to supply this activity, first with environment, then with materials and tools under the instruction of actual skilled work going on, with the necessary group play and occupations, almost entirely self-directed, but with the constant personal interpretation and explanation of companionable teachers whenever and wherever the children ask for it. The work naturally shapes itself into three broad divisions. First, the kindergarten class for children under 7 years of age, doing the usual kindergarten plays and occupations, but entirely without dictation or close work, and with no “finished” work for exhibition. Second comes what Mrs. Johnson calls the “life class” for children from 7 to 13. During all this time the children simply “live as happy and wholesome a life as possible,” no textbooks being used up to 10 years except when a child expressly desires to learn to read. Instead of the formal work of reading and writing and number, the children in the Organic School have singing for the sheer joy of singing, often acting out the words of song or poem. Exercises in fundamental conceptions of number come into the play naturally every day without ever being regarded as tasks, but more as interesting

puzzles...At 14 or 15 the children enter the high school, where for four years they follow their bent and interest in science, art, language, literature or handicraft.

Potter observed that there “are no regular rows of fixed desks and benches, but just broad, low tables and chairs that fit, which can be moved back to make room for games and free play at will, with windows wide open to fields and woods and sky and sea.” He described various activities of the kindergarten and in the “life class,” such as story-telling, work in a “manual training shop,” learning “the use of books for definite purposes,” or the “daily walk.”

All hands are invited to come for a daily walk in the open air each day, the direction being determined by interest or whim, but with eyes sharpened to see the evidences of wood life and the season’s changes. The outdoor gymnasium aids in the physical development...The whole object is to develop a fine body, a high degree of intelligence and a sweet spirit, the child always doing something because he has an interest in it and a purpose of his own in view, not to get a particular mark or pass into a higher artificial grade.

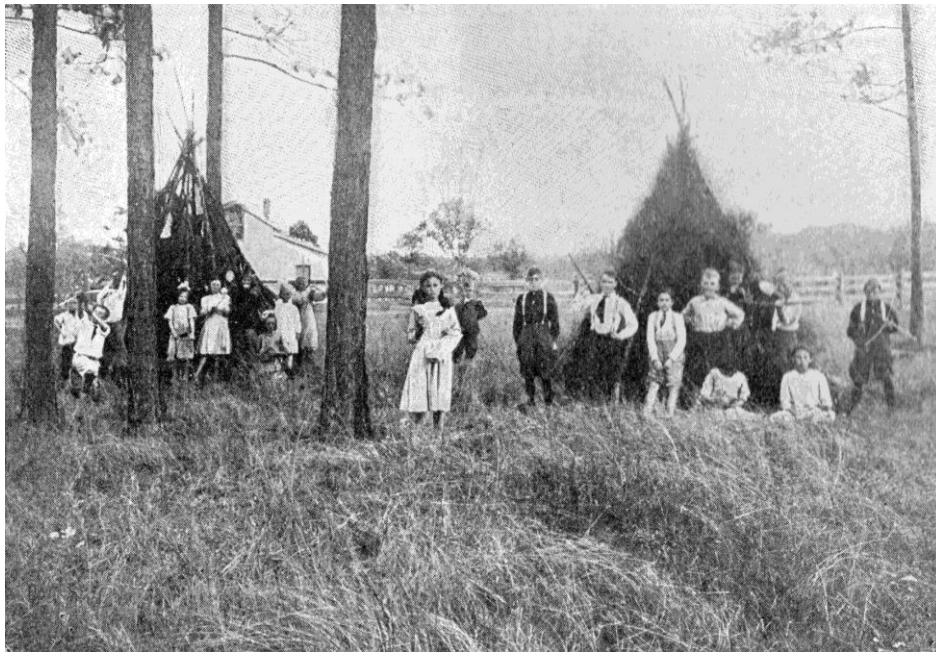
Potter’s account of the School of Organic Education also included a description of Marietta Johnson’s “Summer School” at the University of Pennsylvania a few months earlier. He said she had plans to “establish a model school with normal training adjunct at Arden, Del., which will be within easy reach of eastern educators,” adding that this actually reveals Johnson’s plans as his story is “the first announcement of that project.”

The trial school conducted in the University was in some respects a remarkable test of both the organic method and of the personality of the woman herself. For the children handed over to her were a lot of backward and wayward misfits of the primary grades on whom the ordinary schools had failed utterly to make any satisfactory impression. Besides this, she was handicapped by having these children placed in a conventional schoolroom, cramped for space, filled with desks, and the whole experiment conducted in the hot summer season, when all children should be, at that age especially, living an outdoor life. But the way she went at the problem thus presented was a revelation to all who had the privilege of seeing her. With a variety of materials to make things with, weaving, carving, drawing with colors, basketwork and so on, mostly supplied by herself, Mrs. Johnson soon had the dull or incorrigible group of boys and girls forgetting themselves in active occupations... Mrs. Johnson declares that any work ceases to have educational value when it lacks in interest. The children in this trial school quickly discovered that they were not repressed in the ordinary fashion, but had the right to move about and talk about their work so long as they did not interfere with the rights of others to work or to listen...There is a cheerful and compelling magnetism about this woman’s energetic personality that in part explains her great success with children...“I am teaching children, not subjects,” is one of Mrs. Johnson’s characteristic remarks. In the schools for the defective she finds the organic methods being applied more intelligently than in most of the ordinary schools. Their success with the abnormal goes toward proving their efficiency with the normal. As a matter of fact, these backward children whom Mrs. Johnson made happy in unconscious forms of work and play for some six weeks last summer were doing the higher number, geography and history work of the fifth grad when they finished. She does not pretend to disdain the best pedagogical methods in vogue, but applies them with regard to the individuality of the child and has no cut-and-dry system of teaching subjects...After hearing Mrs. Johnson tell of her work in Fairhope and of her plans for extending it elsewhere, I asked her just how she proposed to effect such radical changes in the established public school system. She replied that the first step was to demonstrate the truth of these methods in trial or model schools near enough to important cities to enable educators to see the process and the results. Thus she would win the consent of those in charge of a city’s schools to make a test.

Clearly, Marietta Johnson’s six-week ‘trial school’ went almost unnoticed by the media (compare *Fairhope Courier*, 1911c). It seems there is no other data from 1911 of this summer school at the University of Pennsylvania. Nevertheless, there were plans to organize a similar kind of summer school in Arden in 1912. Note further that the *Syracuse Herald* of December 9, in their announcement of articles to appear in next day’s issue, proudly stated that Potter’s article on the Fairhope School of Organic Education was “splendidly” illustrated. As noted above, six photos illustrate Potter’s text, including a portrait of Marietta Johnson taken by photographer Marceau. Other photos show the students of Johnson’s school at various activities:



1. The photo of children roofing a wooden one-story building, which appeared in the *Christian Science Monitor* of November 29, 1911 (see above), also appears in Potter's article — the caption reads, "Pupils Building a new Workshop at the Organic School at Fairhope, Ala" (see *Note 1*).
  2. Another photo shows students accompanied by their teacher sitting in front of a white wooden building. The caption reads, "A 'Life Class' at Work Outdoors." Frank Stewart took the photo (see *Note 2*).
  3. A photo shows children lying (outside) on and under a veranda. The caption reads, "A Class at Rest Indoors." Frank Stewart most likely took the photo.
  4. Centrally to the arrangement of the illustrations is a photo of children standing in front of two teepees (see *Figure 4*). The caption reads, "A 'Life Class' in Front of Its Indian Teepees." Frank Stewart took this photo (see *Note 3*).
  5. The last photo shows teenage students wearing long white embellished dresses. The caption reads, "Advanced Maidens in a Greek Play." Frank Stewart took the photo (see *Note 4*).
- The same day, the *Oregon Daily Journal* also published Potter's article (Potter, 1911a).



**Figure 4: Photo of children standing in front of two teepees in the September 1912 *Pictorial Review* (Bennett, 1912, p. 12).**

### 1912: More Illustrated Articles On Johnson's School of Organic Education

In March 1912 — after the *Fairhope Courier* (1912e) briefly reported a reception at Marietta Johnson's home — *Current Literature* (1912, p. 311) referred to Marietta Johnson in an article on Maria Montessori: "Mrs. Mariette [sic; J.S.] Johnson is working out a system of 'organic' education at Fairhope, Alabama, and at Arden, Delaware." Clearly, Potter's word that Johnson intended to expand her work to Arden was already rapidly travelling through the educational world. The same month, the *Friend's Intelligencer* published a letter to the editor written by Edwin S. Potter (1912), stating "an educational demonstration almost identical with that made by Madame Montessori is now under way in the United States and conducted by an American woman bred in our own American schools:"

I refer to the School of Organic Education, conducted by Mrs. Mariette [sic; J.S.] Johnson, at Fairhope, Ala., where it was established five years ago...free to the children of the village and supported by voluntary contributions. Mrs. Johnson's central idea is to give the child a good environment close to nature, with various play and occupational materials and child companionship, and then to let his own spontaneous interests and needs largely determine what he shall do or learn or experience and when, the teacher standing by as a friendly and loving companion to interpret facts and experiences, give approval or otherwise as justly due. Thus she believes that the whole organism



of the child will (and she finds that it does) grow into its maximum strength and harmony. The young mind becomes individualized and had power to make its own choices. Originality thrives in the sunshine of liberty and love. Education thus is not preparation *for* life. It *is* life from the start, and the school is the place where the child wants to be. There is no forcing, no cramming, no marks or competitive examinations and textbooks themselves come into use only when their need is perceived by some purpose of the unfolding child mind.

And again, Potter pointed to Marietta Johnson's six-week 'trial school' at the University of Pennsylvania in the summer of 1911:

Last summer Mrs. Johnson gave a demonstration of her methods in the University of Pennsylvania Summer School. The coming summer she is to conduct a camp-school at Arden, De., with a training class for teachers. She believes her methods can be used gradually in the existing schools, public or private. She welcomes inquiries.

From March 15 until May 10, the *Fairhope Courier* published advertorials written by Marietta Johnson (1912abcdefg). Each advertorial was opened with the introduction of a specific story theme, which was then more or less covered, and closed with an extensive reference to the good work of the School of Organic Education and that there would be "an attractive booklet" about the school sent on request: on March 15 (1912a), "backward" children and equal opportunity; on March 22 (1912b) about a colt that would not grow; on March 29 (1912c) on equal opportunities; on April 5 (1912d) on general ideas about Organic Education; on April 12 (1912e) on obedience; on April 26 (1912f) on an *Journal of Education* article stating that many children are "retarded;" on May 3 (1912g) on the importance of children and hogs; and finally on May 10 (1912h), about children in the School of Organic Education gain a conception of "number."

In April, the *Evening Journal* (1912) reported,

Through the efforts of Mr. and Mrs. Edwin S. Potter, of Arden, Mrs. Mariette [*sic*; J.S.] Johnson, of Fairhope, Ala., who delivered several lectures at the Arden [single tax; J.S.] colony last summer, is to conduct an "organic" school there this year. Mrs. Johnson, who conducts such a school in the Alabama colony will come here this summer and operate the school along the lines of the famous Montessori Schools of Rome. The school at Arden will take the form of a summer school at first but as it is understood a building is to be erected on the Sherwood side of the colony it may become a permanent institution. The pupils will be charged a nominal fee to pay.

A month later, the *Temple Artisan* had an article on education stating that "education is a dull affair," indicating that the primary work of the youth in schools was to sit from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.; children's secondary work was "staring at a book;" and their third activity was "keeping quiet and obeying certain, generally harmful rules" (Hillyard, 1912, p. 192). However, the author, Sydney M. Hillyard (*Ibid.*, p. 193) thought that the sad state of affairs could be changed, and referred to both the Montessori Method and Johnson's Fairhope school, suggesting Johnson was an early Montessorian (compare Gutek & Gutek, 2020):

The Montessori system is attracting attention. Already one teacher, Mrs. Johnson of Fairhope, Ala., a single tax colony, has proven the success of it in her work. Mrs. Johnson does not teach "subjects" (and she won't have them taught in schools); she teaches children. The result is that the scholars are not in school at all—they are at play; and when a child is at play it learns fast and never forgets. The Montessori method is attracting attention. Let us hope it will presently attract money. Mrs. Johnson has already supplanted discipline in her schools with happiness, freedom, and spontaneity. Let us hope it will be supplanted with these in every school in America. It would be well if trustees of schools would write to Mrs. M. L. Johnson, at Fairhope, for her leaflets on "Organic Education." Men of international reputation, like Joseph Fels and Daniel Kiefer [see *Note 5*] are on her advisory board. "Organic Education" seeks to adapt the school to the child, not the child to the school. Nothing better could be said than this quotation from the "Purpose" of organic education. "Growth should be unconscious and natural. It should be joyous and continuous. Organic education is Life." "Organic Education" does not mean that the children shall never learn anything. They learn things in which they are interested, and they learn them quickly and well. Open-air geography and topography, elementary chemistry and botany, music, singing and dancing, drawing and the manual arts, can all be taught outside, or without desks and certainly without books.

During the summer vacation of 1912, Marietta Johnson began a lecture tour to raise money. She would end her tour in Arden, Delaware, where she would lead a summer school. The *Fairhope Courier* (1912c) reported on May 24 that she had left for Arden, “where she will conduct a summer school as a result of the good work done by her last summer in the experimental class she handled at the University of Pennsylvania summer school.” But first, she travelled to Washington, D.C. to attend the 11<sup>th</sup> annual convention of the Women’s National Single Tax League, where she gave a lecture on May 28 on “Education and Economics” (possibly the same content as her article in the *Fairhope Courier* (1911a) of November 17, 1911, discussed above):

Mrs. Mariette [*sic*; J.S.] L. Johnson...described the methods employed in the Organic School and the Single Tax colony at Fairhope, where the teachers study children rather than lessons, and the students are given books in the earlier years of their training; the aim of the school being to develop the child mentally, physically, and spiritually, into a well-rounded character. Such a school has been carried on for five years at Fairhope with a marked degree of success, and a similar experiment is to be made in Arden, this summer. (*Single Tax Review*, 1912, p. 58).

An almost word for word identical text was part of a report in the *Fairhope Courier* (1912g) of June 7. On May 30, a day after the Convention ended, Johnson gave a speech as invitees gathered after a basket meal was eaten.

A fortnight later, the editions of the *Washington Herald* (1912c) and the *Washington Times* (1912a) of June 16 announced that Johnson would lecture on June 17 at the Sherwood Presbyterian Church. Two days later the same newspapers reported that a large audience had heard her lauding the astonishing results her school had accomplished (*Washington Herald*, 1912b; *Washington Times*, 1912b).

The *Fairhope Courier* (1912a) of June 14 quoted from an article published in the local newspaper *Arden Leaves* that Marietta Johnson and Mrs. Potter would conduct the summer school in Arden, Delaware.

“We expect to have with us Mrs. Marietta Johnson, an up-to-date educator, who for the past four years has been conducting...an Organic School which has become famous for the good sense and reasonableness [*sic*; J.S.] of its methods.

\* \* \*

“For girls and boys of all ages the following occupations and studies are offered: Manual Training [*sic*; J.S.] under the advice of skilled craftsmen, Field Geography, (including cross country walks), Nature Study (plant and animal life in field and forest) Art, Music, Dancing, Expression, Literature and Story-telling, Field Sports and Swimming, Domestic Science and Social Service as applied to camp life.

\* \* \*

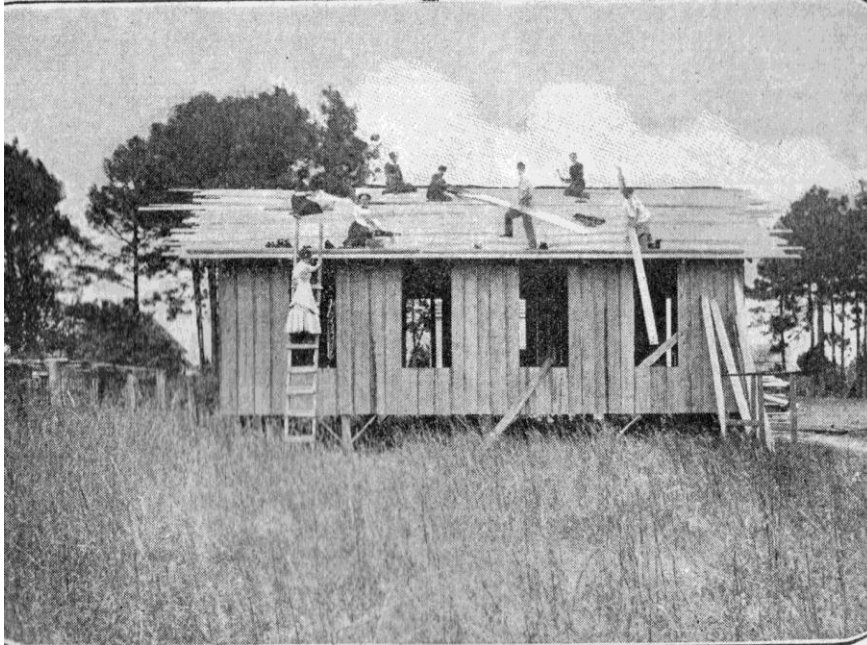
The Camp is situated in the edge of Sherwood Forest, through which runs a brook and nearby bubbles a fine large spring of pure water. Facilities for outdoor bathing are offered. Campers will sleep in screened tents in small groups, each under the personal supervision of an adult. Meals served in a screened pavilion will be on the vegetarian plan. Special attention will be given to this branch of the service, ample meals of simple, substantial, healthful foods being assured, with an abundance of fruit and fresh vegetables and eggs, pure milk, etc., from the neighboring farms.

In July, then, Johnson conducted the summer school camp at the single tax colony at Arden, Delaware. The *San Francisco Call* (1912) of August 31 — a newspaper with a daily circulation of about 62,000 copies and about 74,000 on Sundays — featured an illustrated article about the camp, praising Johnson’s Fairhope school “where every boy and girl does as he or she likes:”

What adult man or woman will not breathe “Backward, turn backward, O time, in thy flight” when he or she reads that there is a school in existence where every boy and girl does as he or she likes? This novel scholastic idea is the keynote of the teaching at Arden, the colony of the Single Tax community in Delaware. To establish the Single Tax Do as You Like School Mrs. M. L. Johnson, the leader in this kind of pedagogy, has been brought from Fairhope, Ala., where she has been teaching the young idea how to shoot along entirely new lines for some years past. Fairhope, it may be necessary to explain, is another Single Tax colony, run on much the same lines as that at Arden. In pursuance of the plan to let the boys and girls of the new school do as they please, the sessions at Arden include

such novel scholastic exercises as standing on the head, throwing stones at a target, archery, dancing, wrestling and visits, as often an any boy or girl suggests it, to the Arden swimming hole.

As a large number of teachers and those interested in child welfare have visited Arden with a view to studying at close range this novel idea in training the young, it will be interesting to explain the reasons advanced in favor of the method by those in charge of the Single Tax school.



**Figure 5: Photo of children roofing a wooden one-story building in the September 1912 *Pictorial Review* (Bennett, 1912, p. 13).**

The *San Francisco Call* article cited Johnson's goal of developing "sound bodies, healthy and alert minds possessing originality, and sweet and sympathetic spirits," and sketched activities such as standing on one's head, (folk-)dancing, throwing stones at a target. It was noted that the children loved the swimming and reading sessions. The article further described the single tax Ardenites' democratic community and explained "single taxers are devout believers in vegetables" (meaning vegetarianism). Yet,

It must not be supposed that this novel school is an Arden school exclusively. The children are sent there by parents who approve the ideas set forth, but who are not single tax advocates themselves. Some, of course, are children of the Ardenites, but many are from distant cities.

Three photos illustrated the text. The photographer is unknown.

1. A photo of children and two teachers standing in a circle, several children in the act of attempting to stand on their head; the caption reads, "Class in the Stand on Your Head Studies—Mrs. Johnson, Leader of the School, Wears Skirt Costume. Her Assistant, Mrs. Patten, is in Bloomers."
2. A photo of children standing and sitting in the company of teachers Johnson and Patten; the caption reads, "A Raffia Class in Session."
3. Another photo of a group of children in the act of throwing stones; the caption reads, "Class in Stone Throwing."

The next day, both the *Boston Daily Globe* and *Washington Herald* reprinted the article. *Boston Daily Globe* had a daily circulation of about 185,000 copies and about 322,000 on Sundays. A week later, the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* (1912) also reprinted the article (see *Figure 6*). *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* had a daily circulation of about 42,000 copies, and about 70,000 on Sundays.

The *Boston Daily Globe* (1912) had the same photos as the *San Francisco Call* (1912) along with similar captions, as did the *Washington Herald* (1912). However, the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* (1912) had only one image similar: the body of Photo No. 1, now titled "The Champion of the 'Stand on Your Head' Class Shows Off." Four new photos illustrated the text in the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*. The name of the photographer of these photos is also unknown.



- a. A photograph of a group of children and adult in a circle, dancing. The title is: “A Dance on the Edge of the Forest.”
- b. A photo of children on benches at tables. The caption reads, “Dinner Time in the Junior Camp.”
- c. A third photograph, of a house; an older man, a young woman and two children on the porch. The caption reads, “An Arden Cottage and Three Generations.”
- d. An almost identical photo to the one that appeared in the *San Francisco Call / Boston Daily Globe / Washington Herald* article of the (same) children throwing stones, now labeled “Class in Stone Throwing Gets Busy.”

Then, the August 1912 issue of the *American Educational Review* included a review of an article by Helen Christine Bennett to appear in the September 1912 *Pictorial Review* (see below), detailing Bennett’s version of Marietta Johnson’s story in *The Public* of December 1911, telling that Johnson always explained that she taught children the way farmers grow their corn. If the corn is not growing, farmers do “not blame the corn, nor scold it, nor give it a bad mark, nor call it stupid,” but they are hastening “to change conditions until [the] corn responds by better production” (*American Educational Review*, 1912, p. 633).



**Figure 6: Excerpt from “A School Where Pupils Stand on Their Heads” in the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, September 8, 1912.**

Helen Christine Bennett (1912) opened her illustrated article in the *Pictorial Review* by describing a dialogue between students and a teacher at Marietta Johnson’s school, in much the same way as the unknown author of the *San Francisco Call / Boston Daily Globe / Brooklyn Daily Eagle / Washington Herald* article had previously done. Like that author, she calls herself a “visitor” to the school — a very unusual way of describing herself. The writing styles and formats of both articles are very similar.

In all likelihood, Bennett therefore not only wrote the article in the *Pictorial Review*, but also the article that appeared in four major newspapers mentioned above. And if so, she may also have been the unknown photographer of the photos illustrating the text of these various newspaper articles about the summer camp in Arden, Delaware!

Bennett’s (1912, p. 12) article in the *Pictorial Review* constitutes a kind of report of her five months of participant observation in Marietta Johnson’s school:

The school seemed worth a second visit, a third and a fourth. Then I arranged to come constantly, and for five months I entered the classes at will and became acquainted with the teachers and scholars. I was soon convinced that in the little town of Fairhope...there is being conducted an educational experiment, the value of which cannot be computed, with methods and results fully as interesting and as startling as those of Madame Montessori.



The School of Organic Education at Fairhope grew out of a book. It is frankly an experiment. It is trying to demonstrate the worth of a new educational theory, and the five years of its existence have produced such unusual children that it can claim to be an experiment worth watching. Seven years ago the present principal of the school, Mrs. Marietta Johnson, was endeavoring to reconcile her ideas of education with those of the public school system. The two failed to adjust themselves; but to Mrs. Johnson's delight, she found a book which put into words her own ideas. She finished "Education and the Larger Life," by Charles Hanford Henderson, adopted its suggestions and began to experiment upon its theory with her own children. They responded so well that soon several children from the neighborhood joined them. After two years of experimental work she decided to try a school...The Fairhope Single Tax Corporation made the school a public one by paying for every child who became a pupil, and at the end of the second year there were sixty-five. The end of the fifth year finds the school with one hundred and fifty pupils, and these constitute two-thirds of the entire school population of the town...Mrs. Johnson is growing these boys and girls very much as the farmer grows corn.

So, Bennett was referring to Henderson's *Education and the Larger Life*; she told the early history of the school; indeed, she also related Marietta Johnson's (1911) comparison of educating children like farmers grown corn — made in *The Public*, as stated in the August *American Educational Review* (1912). Additionally, Bennett (1912, p. 12) quoted Johnson's (1911, p. 1289) criticism of mainstream public schools:

Why should education insist upon being uneducational? The insane desire to *teach* [Bennett's emphasis; J.S.] is a fatal barrier to development, which is education...If children do not thrive under the educational system provided, why not change the system?

Bennett went on to explain the school's departments and activities: kindergarten, two so-called 'life classes,' and Seventh and Eighth Grades; children singing and dramatizing songs; school gardens; daily excursions; outdoor nature study; not read and write before the age of nine; children make their own rulers and measure with them; the absence of almost all formal relations; as well as the absence of what is termed formal learning, while no child had "ever been 'left back' or 'put back'" (Bennett, 1912, p. 13).

At least half of the school hours of both Kindergarten and Life Classes are spent outdoors. There are no desks and no fixed seats in the class rooms of the latter. When the children are in the rooms, they occupy chairs of various sizes, graduated in height to accommodate growing limbs. And when the nature of the work demands it, they sit at long tables...Even the formal studies are as often given outdoors as in. In the bottom of the gullies which abound in Fairhope is a bed of clean, white sand. After a rain has packed this down, it makes the finest slate imaginable, and a whole class will happily compute upon this novel blackboard, using sticks as pencils...When experience cannot precede knowledge, it can often accompany it as dramatization. The children become Indians and live in wigwams of their building. They make arrows and bows and practice archery. They dramatize "Sleeping Beauty" and construct a spinning wheel from a bicycle turned upside down. (Bennett, 1912, pp. 12-13).

Besides outlining her observations of the consequences of a steady influx of children from public schools who at first were unable to adjust to the school's liberty and freedom, Bennett sketched the children of Johnson's school as affectionate; high spirited; original; self-reliant; knowing as much as public school children of their years; fluently expressing themselves; more intelligent in absorbing new knowledge; and: amazingly interested in abstract questions.

Five photos illustrated Bennett's article in *Pictorial Review*:

1. The photograph of children standing in front of two teepees (see *Figure 4*) which already illustrated the article published in the *Syracuse Herald* and *Oregon Daily Journal* of December 9, 1911 (Potter, 1911ab), analyzed above. The caption reads, "The Wigwams in the Picture Above Were Made by the Life Class." As stated, Frank Stewart took this photo (see *Note 3*).
2. The photograph of children roofing a wooden one-story building (see *Figure 5*), which appeared in the *Christian Science Monitor* of November 29, 1911 (see above) as well as in the article published in the *Syracuse Herald* and *Oregon Daily Journal* of December 9, 1911 (Potter, 1911ab), analyzed above. The caption reads, "Pupils of the High School and Teachers' Training Classes Are Putting up a Manual Training Building" (see *Note 1*).

3. A photo of children playing in the playground next to the main school building — the so-called Bell Building (see *Figure 7*). The caption reads, “The Main Building and a Portion of the Grounds Are Shown.” Helen Christine Bennett probably took this photo (see *Note 6*).
4. A photo of children scratching the wall of a Fairhope gully and sitting on the sandy bottom of the gully (see *Figure 8*). The caption reads, “The Picture Above Shows How the Children Do Their Figuring in the Clay and Sand.” Helen Christine Bennett probably took this photo (see *Note 7*).
5. Finally, a photo of children cleaning a street (see *Figure 9*). The caption reads, “The Children in the Street Are Spearing Papers and Collecting Rubbish.” Helen Christine Bennett probably took this photo (see *Note 8*).

Note that the *Pictorial Review* was a women’s magazine with a minimum circulation of over 700,000 copies.



**Figure 7: Photo of children playing in the playground next to the main school building in the September 1912 *Pictorial Review* (Bennett, 1912, p. 12).**

Also in September, the *Fairhope Courier* (1912d) quoted from a message from Marietta Johnson, sent from Philadelphia.

Mrs. Potter, who has been associated with her in the summer School at Arden, will come to Fairhope to take charge of the boarding department of the Organic School. She will arrive during the latter part of this month. Mrs. Potter is a woman of many years’ experience in school work and with children, has made a study of children’s diet and care and is a woman of unusual ability and culture.

This is an announcement of importance to Fairhope and one to be well considered by parents with children whom they wish to place in an ideal home and school, climate and community, for the winter.

The boarding department will be conducted upon the cottage plan, from five to ten children living in a homelike way, in charge of adults who will also assist in the work of the school, so that the plan of supervision and direction is consistent throughout. Especial attention will be given to matters of diet, bathing, sleep, etc.

It is clear that the summer school in Arden bore immediate fruit!

Then, the November 17 edition of the New York newspaper *Sun* (1912) stated that Johnson was reportedly “the originator of one of the most remarkable educational movements” in the United States. Johnson explained to the reporter that she named her teaching method Organic Education and that she wanted to develop “sound bodies as well as healthy and alert minds.” The article talks about her school as a “do as you like school” — as did the article in the *San Francisco Call* / *Boston Daily Globe* / *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* / *Washington Herald* (see above). Johnson reiterated that all schools “should be a preparation for life. The do as you like school should be more; it is life.”

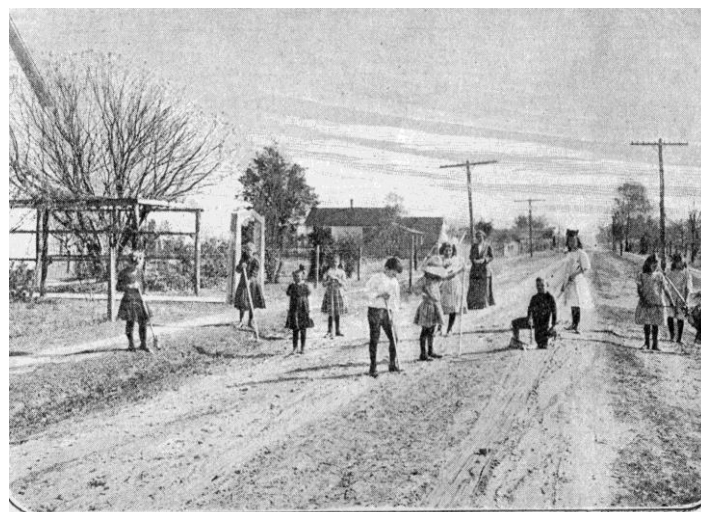
The *Sun* reporter noted,

One result of these do as you like schools is that there are no delicate children among the pupils. However frail a child may be when he enters he soon becomes strong and well, since much of school time is passed out of doors swimming, dancing, playing ball, throwing stones, practicing archery, playing marbles or any other game that may be decided on by the pupils. Most of their reading is done while seated in small groups out of doors and from books of their own selection. Arithmetic is taught on the ground or on the walls of a deep clay gully near Mrs. Johnson's school and put to practical use in building houses or making boxes or any other way a child may wish.



**Figure 8: Photo of children scratching the wall of a Fairhope gully and sitting on the sandy bottom of the gully in the September 1912 *Pictorial Review* (Bennett, 1912, p. 13)**

The *Trenton Evening True American* of December 5 contains an article reiterating Johnson's strong views on reading and writing; arithmetic; story telling; games in the open air; examinations; and large classes, as she expressed in a speech entitled "Organic Training" to the Mothers' Clubs of the Cook and Cadwallader Schools. The December 9 *Trenton Evening True American* announced that on December 11, Johnson would lecture on Organic Education at a regular meeting of the Present Day Club at the Thomson Hall, Princeton, New Jersey. It seems the media has not paid more attention to this lecture.



**Figure 9: Photo of children cleaning a street in the September 1912 *Pictorial Review* (Bennett, 1912, p. 13).**



Finally, the *Fairhope Courier* (1912b) of December 20 reported that Marietta Johnson had “returned from a trip east in the interest of Organic Education in general and the Fairhope School of Organic Education in particular,” and that she managed to increase the amount of funds for the continued existence of the school “during this year, and probably next year.”

### Notes.

1. The *FSTCA* (n.d., Object ID BSS.466-468) description states, “...students and teachers building a school room, the first kinder building.” Note that the *FSTCA* (n.d., Object ID FSTC-0020) description of another, 100 % similar photo states, “...students and teachers building the Domestic Science Building.” For information on Frank Stewart, compare *FSTCA* (n.d., Object IDs FSTC-V0049 and FSTC-V0057); Barrett, 2017.
2. The photo, taken by Frank Stewart, is also reprinted in Barrett (2017, p. 64) where it is stated that it shows a “sewing class.” *FSTCA* (n.d., Object ID BSS.454-455) description states, “...students working on their embroidery projects...Teacher Lois Slosson Sundberg is supervising the class...The Organic School Manual Training Department building is in the background.” (For information on Mrs. Slosson Sundberg, compare *Fairhope Courier* (1912f); *FSTCA* (n.d., Object ID FSTC-V0051). The photo is reprinted in Donelson (2005, p. 69 top) where the caption reads, “Children do handwork in a class outside c. 1910.”
3. The photo is reprinted in Donelson (2005, p. 70 top), where the caption reads, “Students learned by doing at the Organic School and studied American Indian history and culture by creating teepee villages.” *FSTCA* (n.d., Object ID BSS.464-) states, “...students making teepees at the Organic School.” And *MJM* (MJM-66) states, “Indian Encampment on the campus of the Marietta Johnson School of Organic Education.”
4. A very similar photo, with a large number of identical people, appears in Barrett (2017, p. 205), stating, “It looks like it could be a school play at the Fairhope Public School or the Organic School...”
5. For information on Donald (“Don”) Kiefer from Cincinnati, Ohio, consult *FSTCA* (n.d.).
6. The photo is reprinted in Donelson (2005, p. 48 top), where the caption states, “Here students do exercises in the schoolyard, while others play tennis on a clay court.”
7. The photo is reprinted in Dewey & Dewey (1915ab, facing p. 30), where the caption reads, “The Gully is a favorite textbook.”
8. It appears as if the photo is part of a series of which five other photos appeared in the May 1914 *McCall's Magazine*, in another article about Johnson's school written by Bennett (1914).

### Bibliography: included in Part II.